

# FDR provoked the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor



It has long been suspected that there was advanced knowledge of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that was not properly given to commanders at Pearl Harbor, information that could have prevented the attack or let the American forces be more prepared.

This is a complex situation. There are two primary issues at hand:

- 1) Was the attack on Pearl Harbor provoked?
- 2) Did the FDR administration have prior knowledge of an impending attack and fail to warn those stationed at Pearl Harbor?

Whether or not FDR knew about the Japanese plans to attack Pearl Harbor actually misses the larger and more important issue, which is the fact that the Japanese were provoked into attacking America at Pearl Harbor. The majority of Americans, and even service men, were unaware of what was going on behind the scenes, but not all were. FDR had been charged in public with agitating for war since 1939. FDR had to push the Japanese into attacking the United States because the overwhelming majority of Americans opposed getting involved in the war and Japan itself had no intentions of attacking the United States, their interest was Asia. Without FDR's antagonisms towards the Japanese, Congress and the American people never would have allowed FDR to declare war on Japan or Germany; FDR knew this, and he also knew how important it really was that America join in the war against fascism and imperialism.

The most direct evidence of antagonisms toward Japan is the McCollum Memo written October 7<sup>th</sup> 1940 (declassified in 1994) that was given to FDR as well as the actions that were later taken by the administration.

OP-16-F-2

ON:

7 OCTOBER 1940

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION IN THE PACIFIC AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE UNITED STATES.

1. THE UNITED STATES TODAY FINDS HERSELF CONFRONTED BY A HOSTILE GERMANY AND ITALY IN EUROPE AND BY AN EquALLY HOSTILE JAPAN IN THE ORIENT. RUSSIA, THE GREAT LAND LINK BETWEEN THESE TWO GROUPS OF HOSTILE POWERS, IS AT PRESENT NEUTRAL, BUT IN ALL PROBABILITY FAVORABLY INCLINED TOWARDS THE AXIS POWERS, AND HER FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THESE POWERS MAY BE EXPECTED TO INCREASE IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO INCREASING SUCCESS IN THEIR PROSECUTION OF THE WAR IN EUROPE. GERMANY AND ITALY HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN WAR ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE AND ALL OF EUROPE IS EITHER UNDER THEIR MILITARY CONTROL OR HAS BEEN FORCED INTO SUBSERVIENCE. ONLY THE BRITISH EMPIRE IS ACTIVELY OPPOSING BY WAR THE GROWING WORLD DOMINANCE OF GERMANY AND ITALY AND THEIR SATELLITES.

2. THE UNITED STATES AT FIRST REMAINED COOLLY ALOOF FROM THE CONFLICT IN EUROPE AND THERE IS CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE VIEW THAT GERMANY AND ITALY ATTEMPTED BY EVERY METHOD WITHIN THEIR POWER TO FOSTER A CONTINUATION OF AMERICAN INDIFFERENCE TO THE OUTCOME OF THE STRUGGLE IN EUROPE. PARADOXICALLY, EVERY SUCCESS OF GERMAN AND ITALIAN ARMS HAS LED TO FURTHER INCREASES IN UNITED STATES SYMPATHY FOR AND MATERIAL SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, UNTIL AT THE PRESENT TIME THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT STANDS COMMITTED TO A POLICY OF RENDERING EVERY SUPPORT SHORT OF WAR WITH THE CHANCES RAPIDLY INCREASING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL BECOME A FULL FLEDGED ALLY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. THE FINAL FAILURE OF GERMAN AND ITALIAN DIPLOMACY TO KEEP THE UNITED STATES IN THE ROLE OF A DISINTERESTED SPECTATOR HAS FORCED THEM TO ADOPT THE POLICY OF DEVELOPING THREATS TO U.S. SECURITY IN OTHER SPHERES OF THE WORLD, NOTABLY BY THE THREAT OF REVOLUTIONS IN SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA BY AXIS-DOMINATED GROUPS AND BY THE STIMULATION OF JAPAN TO FURTHER AGGRESSIONS AND THREATS IN THE FAR EAST IN THE HOPE THAT BY THESE MEANS THE UNITED STATES WOULD BECOME SO CONFUSED IN THOUGHT AND FEARFUL OF HER OWN IMMEDIATE SECURITY AS TO CAUSE HER TO BECOME SO PREOCCUPIED IN PURELY DEFENSIVE PREPARATIONS AS TO VIRTUALLY PRECLUDE U.S. AID TO GREAT BRITAIN IN ANY FORM. AS A RESULT OF THIS POLICY, GERMANY AND ITALY HAVE LATELY CONCLUDED A MILITARY ALLIANCE WITH JAPAN DIRECTED AGAINST THE UNITED STATES. IF THE PUBLISHED TERMS OF THIS TREATY AND THE POINTED UTTERANCES OF GERMAN, ITALIAN AND JAPANESE LEADERS CAN BE BELIEVED, AND THERE SEEMS NO GROUND ON WHICH TO DOUBT EITHER, THE THREE TOTALITARIAN POWERS AGREE TO MAKE WAR ON THE UNITED STATES, SHOULD SHE COME TO THE ASSISTANCE OF ENGLAND, OR SHOULD SHE ATTEMPT TO FORGIBLY INTERFERE WITH JAPAN'S AIMS IN THE ORIENT AND,

The McCollum Memo can be viewed here (I strongly advise that you read the entire memo by clicking the image above):

Of critical importance in this memo is the portion that reads:

9. It is not believed that in the present state of political opinion the United States government is capable of declaring war against Japan without more ado; and it is barely possible that vigorous action on our part might lead the Japanese to modify their attitude. Therefore, the following course of action is suggested:

- A. Make an arrangement with Britain for the use of British bases in the Pacific, particularly Singapore.
- B. Make an arrangement with Holland for the use of base facilities and acquisition of supplies in the Dutch East Indies.
- C. Give all possible aid to the Chinese government of Chiang-Kai-Shek.
- D. Send a division of long range heavy cruisers to the Orient, Philippines, or Singapore.
- E. Send two divisions of submarines to the Orient.
- F. Keep the main strength of the U.S. fleet now in the Pacific in the vicinity of the

Hawaiian Islands.

G. Insist that the Dutch refuse to grant Japanese demands for undue economic concessions, particularly oil.

H. Completely embargo all U.S. trade with Japan, in collaboration with a similar embargo imposed by the British Empire.

10. If by these means Japan could be led to commit an overt act of war, so much the better. At all events we must be fully prepared to accept the threat of war.

- H. McCollum

On November 26, 1941 Secretary of State Hull presented "peace terms" to the Japanese. The terms presented by Hull were such that in order for Japan to agree to them they would have had to withdraw from China, and essentially end all hostilities, something that the administration knew was not going to happen. Hull's oral presentation to the Japanese follows:

*"The representatives of the Government of the United States and of the Government of Japan have been carrying on during the past several months informal and exploratory conversations for the purpose of arriving at a settlement if possible of questions relating to the entire Pacific area based upon the principles of peace, law and order and fair dealing among nations.*

*These principles include the principle of inviolability of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each and all nations; the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; the principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity and treatment; and the principle of reliance upon international cooperation and conciliation for the prevention and pacific settlement of controversies and for improvement of international conditions by peaceful methods and processes.*

*It is believed that in our discussions some progress has been made in reference to the general principles which constitute the basis of a peaceful settlement covering the entire Pacific area.*

*Recently the Japanese Ambassador has stated that the Japanese Government is desirous of continuing the conversations directed toward a comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the Pacific area; that it would be helpful toward creating an atmosphere favorable to the successful outcome of the conversations if a temporary modus vivendi could be agreed upon to be in effect while the conversations looking to peaceful settlement in the Pacific were continuing.*

*On November 20 the Japanese Ambassador communicated to the Secretary of State proposals in regard to temporary measure to be taken respectively by the Government of Japan and by the Government of the United States, which measures are understood to have been designed to accomplish the purposes above indicated.*

*The Government of the United States most earnestly desires to contribute to the promotion and maintenance of peace and stability in the Pacific area, and to afford every opportunity for the continuance of discussion with the Japanese Government directed toward working out a broad-gauge program of peace throughout the Pacific area.*

*The proposals which were presented by the Japanese Ambassador on November 20 contain some features which, in the opinion of this Government, conflict with the fundamental principles which form a part of the general settlement under consideration and to which each Government has declared that it is committed. The Government of the United States believes that the adoption of such proposals would not be likely to contribute to the ultimate objectives of ensuring peace under law, order and justice in the Pacific area, and it suggests that further effort be made to resolve our divergences of view in regard to the practical application of the fundamental principles already mentioned.*

*With this object in view the Government of the United States offers for the consideration of the Japanese Government a plan of a broad but simple settlement covering the entire Pacific area as one practical exemplification of a program which this Government envisages as something to be worked out during our further conversations.*

*The plan therein suggested represents an effort to bridge the gap between our draft of June 21, 1941 and the Japanese draft of September 25 by making a new approach to the essential problems underlying a comprehensive Pacific settlement. This plan contains provisions dealing with the practical application of the fundamental principles which we have agreed in our conversations constitute the only sound basis for worthwhile international relations. We hope that in this way progress toward reaching a meeting of minds between our two Governments may be expedited."*

The text of the Hull Memo is below:

Strictly confidential, tentative and without commitment

November 26, 1941.

Section I

Draft Mutual Declaration of Policy

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan both being solicitous for the peace of the Pacific affirm that their national policies are directed toward lasting and extensive peace throughout the Pacific area, that they have no territorial designs in that area, that they have no intention of threatening other countries or of using military force aggressively against any neighboring nation, and that, accordingly, in their national policies they will actively support and give practical application to the following fundamental principles upon which their relations with each other and with all other governments are based:

The principle of inviolability of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each and all nations.

The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

The principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity and treatment.

The principle of reliance upon international cooperation and conciliation for the prevention and pacific settlement of controversies and for improvement of international conditions by peaceful methods and processes.

The Government of Japan and the Government of the United States have agreed that toward eliminating chronic political instability, preventing recurrent economic collapse, and providing a basis for peace, they will actively support and practically apply the following principles in their economic relations with each other and with other nations and peoples:

The principle of non-discrimination in international commercial relations.

The principle of international economic cooperation and abolition of extreme nationalism as expressed in excessive trade restrictions.

The principle of non-discriminatory access by all nations to raw material supplies.

The principle of full protection of the interests of consuming countries and populations as regards the operation of international commodity agreements.

The principle of establishment of such institutions and arrangements of international finance as may lend aid to the essential enterprises and the continuous development of all countries and may permit payments through processes of trade consonant with the welfare of all countries.

Section II

Steps To Be Taken by the Government of the United States and by the Government of Japan

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan propose to take steps as follows:

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will endeavor to conclude a multilateral non-aggression pact among the British Empire, China, Japan, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union, Thailand and the United States.

Both Governments will endeavor to conclude among the American, British, Chinese, Japanese, the Netherland and Thai Governments would pledge itself to respect the territorial integrity of French Indochina and, in the event that there should develop a threat to the territorial integrity of Indochina, to enter into immediate consultation with a view to taking such measures as may be deemed necessary and advisable to meet the threat in question. Such agreement would provide also that each of the Governments party to the agreement would not seek or accept preferential treatment in its trade or economic relations with Indochina and would use its influence to obtain for each of the signatories equality of treatment in trade and commerce with French Indochina.

The Government of Japan will withdraw all military, naval, air and police forces from China and from Indochina.

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will not support - militarily, politically, economically - any government or regime in China other than the National Government of the Republic of China with capital temporarily at Chungking.

Both Governments will endeavor to obtain the agreement of the British and other governments to give up extraterritorial rights in China, including right in international settlements and in concessions and under the Boxer Protocol of 1901.

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will enter into negotiations for the conclusion between the United States and Japan of a trade agreement, based upon reciprocal most favored-nation treatment and reduction of trade barriers by both countries, including an undertaking by the United States to bind raw silk on the free list.

The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will, respectively, remove the freezing restrictions on Japanese funds in the United States and on American funds in Japan.

Both Governments will agree upon a plan for the stabilization of the dollar-yen rate, with the allocation of funds adequate for this purpose, half to be supplied by Japan and half by the United States.

Both Governments will agree that no agreement which either has concluded with any third power or powers shall be interpreted by it in such a way as to conflict with the fundamental purpose of this agreement, the establishment and preservation of peace throughout the Pacific area.

Both Governments will use their influence to cause other governments to adhere to and to give practical application to the basic political and economic principles set forth in this agreement.

Of Hull's presentation to Japan, the American Ambassador to Japan stated that it was: "*The document that touched the button that started the war.*"

After the Hull presentation to the Japanese, the following warning was issued on November 27, 1941, 10 days prior to the Pearl Harbor attack. This memo clearly shows that an attack was suspected, but the nature of the attack was unknown and in fact the primary suspicion was that an attack would occur west of Hawaii.

NAVAL MESSAGE		NAVY DEPARTMENT	MESSAGE PRECEDENCE
PHONE EXTENSION NUMBER	Op-12 Ext. 2992	ADDRESSEES	
FROM Chief of Naval Operations		CINCPAC	PRIORITY X
RELEASED BY <i>Superior J</i>		CINCPAC	ROUTINE
DATE November 27, 1941.			DEFERRED
TOR CODEROOM		CINCLANT	PRIORITY
DECODED BY		SPENAVO	ROUTINE
PARAPHRASED BY			DEFERRED
INDICATE BY ASTERISK ADDRESSEES FOR WHICH MAIL DELIVERY IS SATISFACTORY			
<i>GKVJL BVKLW 272337 0971</i>			
UNLESS OTHERWISE DESIGNATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE.			
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME FOR DEFERRED AND MAIL DELIVERY			
DATE	TIME	SCT	
<i>HEEKS</i>			
<p><i>MM</i> THIS DESPATCH IS TO BE CONSIDERED A WAR WARNING X NEGOTIATIONS          WITH JAPAN LOOKING TOWARD STABILIZATION OF CONDITIONS IN THE  <i>SD</i> PACIFIC HAVE CEASED AND AN AGGRESSIVE MOVE BY JAPAN IS EXPECTED          WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS X THE NUMBER AND EQUIPMENT OF JAPANESE          TROOPS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF NAVAL TASK FORCES INDICATES AN          AMPHIBIOUS EXPEDITION <del>PROBABLY</del> AGAINST EITHER THE PHILIPPINES <i>THAI</i>          OR KRA PENINSULA OR POSSIBLY BORNEO X EXECUTE AN APPROPRIATE          DEFENSIVE DEPLOYMENT PREPARATORY TO CARRYING OUT THE TASKS ASSIGNED          IN WPL46X INFORM DISTRICT AND ARMY AUTHORITIES X A SIMILAR WARNING          IS BEING SENT BY WAR DEPARTMENT X SPENAVO INFORM BRITISH  <del>CONTINENTAL DISTRICTS</del> <del>over seas</del> <del>fascist</del>  <del>to be aggressive measures against subversive, MM</del>  <del>copy to GFD WAR DEPT</del> <i>to be aggressive measures against subversive, MM</i>  <i>enciphered, RALS</i>  <i>BY RAB</i>  <i>ECM-35</i>  <i>GUNEC</i>  <i>SEE RT-66/2#2</i> </p>			
<b>SECRET</b> THIS ORIGINAL ONLY DELIVER TO COMMUNICATION WATCH OFFICER IN PERSON <i>To SPN NAV RT-66/2#2</i>			

Yes conflict was being provoked, but the details of the coming attack were unknown and the attack was much more than anyone had bargained for.

What is most important about the Pearl Harbor incident is understanding *why* FDR resorted to such measures in the first place to get into war.

Congress was not letting FDR get into the war in Europe or the Pacific. This is partly because many of the members of Congress were backed by wealthy Americans who were working with the fascist powers of Europe. America had significant financial ties to the fascist powers at the time of WWII, and the European fascists were backed by private Americans as an anti-Communist force. In addition to these facts the general American population was ill informed about what was going on in Europe and a significant anti-war movement had taken hold in America because America had just come off of a 30 year imperialist military streak that had given Americans negative feelings about American military actions.

American businessmen had been supplying the fascist powers with oil and FDR was finally advised to embargo the trade of oil to the Axis powers in order to help instigate them into declaring war on America as well.

In March of 1941 FDR said to Winston Churchill: "*I may never declare war; I may make war. If I were to ask Congress to declare war they might argue about it for three months.*"

On September 11, 1941 fascist sympathizer and famous American pilot Charles Lindbergh of the "America First Committee" proclaimed :"*If any one of these groups--the British, the Jewish, or the administration--stops agitating for war, I believe there will be little danger of our involvement.*"

# TRICKERY ON WAR

Lists Roosevelt 'Subterfuges'  
at Garden Rally—Wheeler  
Charges Secret Pledges

*The text of Mr. Lindbergh's speech will be found on Page 4.*

Declaring that "there is no danger to this nation from without" but that "our only danger lies from within," Charles A. Lindbergh charged last night that the American people were being led into war by subterfuge. He appealed to them to unite behind a demand for "a leadership of integrity" in Washington.



The fact is that Charles Lindbergh and many other Americans sympathized with the Germans prior to the American entry into the war. In a speech in 1940 Lindbergh stated:

"There is a proverb in China which says that "when the rich become too rich, and the poor too poor, something happens." This applies to nations as well as to men. When I saw the wealth of the British Empire, I felt that the rich had become too rich. When I saw the poverty of Central Europe, I felt that the poor had become too poor. That something would happen was blazoned even on the skies of Europe by mounting thousands of fighting aircraft."

He was effectively expressing the opinion, which was shared by other Americans, that the British had it coming to them and thus America should just stay out. Lindbergh, like Henry Ford and other prominent Americans, had also been awarded a medal of recognition from the Nazis. However, he was correct in stating that FDR was maneuvering for war. Lindbergh and others opposed American aid to Britain and the Soviet-Union with slogans and propaganda like those seen above.

In 1944 British Cabinet Minister Sir Oliver Lyttelton noted that: "*Japan was provoked into attacking the Americans at Pearl Harbor. It is a travesty on history ever to say that America was forced into the war. Everyone knows where American sympathies were. It is incorrect to say that America was ever truly neutral even before America came into the war on a fighting basis.*"

Even after the attack on Pearl Harbor, however, some American isolationists maintained that the US should have done more to "appease" Japan. Just after the Pearl Harbor attack conservative Senator Vandenberg wrote that the United States would have had to yield "relatively little" to pacify Japan. Of Japan he said that "we may have driven her needlessly into hostilities through our dogmatic diplomatic attitudes." "We asked for it, and we got it."

So yes, in the American climate at the time FDR knew that it would not be possible for him to get America to enter the war unless America itself was attacked. He also knew what was at stake and felt that a sacrifice would have to be made, but that unless a sacrifice was made the results could be horrific. FDR wanted to declare war, and rightfully so. The real problem was all of the

people who opposed war in the first place.

Though FDR declined to peruse the approach of Japanese appeasement, which was favored by the majority, FDR's primarily objective was still the war in Europe, however the Pacific contained critical shipping routes that the Japanese were securing to support the Axis powers of Europe. FDR knew that if these supply routs could be cut Britain and the Soviet Union would fare much better in the war.

Hitler also did not want to declare war on America however, but when war broke out between Japan and the United States, Japan forced Hitler to declare war on America because of the alliance between Japan and Germany.

Ever since World War II Americans have generally believed, because that is what they were told to believe, that America was just peacefully minding its own business when Japan, for no reason at all other than their own aggression, came out of nowhere to attack America. In other words, that America was an "innocent victim". This is not the case, though. The Japanese were being provoked and baited by the FDR administration because even though FDR knew it was essential to enter the war against the fascists, the political opposition from American conservatives was too strong. There were supporters of the fascist actively working in the US to keep America out of the war.

Below is an excerpt from a 1947 booklet, [The Roosevelt Death A Super Mystery](#), about the death of FDR. This booklet is by no means a proof of FDR's actions regarding Pearl Harbor, but it is an example of the issues raised by Americans about the issue of Pearl Harbor at the time, and the origins of the overall "conspiracy theory".

certain British politicians who desired, planned and plotted this war. There is only one way that we can get the truth out of Kent's mind without his being sentenced to ten years in prison—namely, if a Congressional Committee will subpoena Kent, put him under oath, and demand that he tell all, he can speak with immunity. It was hoped that the Pearl Harbor Investigating Committee or some other outstanding Congressional Committee, might do this, but the leftover leadership of the Roosevelt administration shuddered at the thought. The international warmongers brought terrific pressure on the proper authorities and Kent was not called.

The ghost of the incident of Tyler Kent was one of the terrific things that haunted the sick man at Warm Springs.

**Ghost No. 2: The Mystery of Pearl Harbor.** The truth, the real truth, and the full truth concerning Pearl Harbor has never been brought out. The nearest that we have ever come to getting it was found in a series of articles written by that courageous journalist, John T. Flynn. Mr. Flynn made himself a student of the Pearl Harbor scandal, and in his articles he identified the scoundrels of the world. Time and space do not permit us to discuss the Pearl Harbor scandal in detail in this manuscript. When the full truth comes out concerning the attack at Pearl Harbor, it will require a full-sized book to cover the subject. It is believed by those 'in the know' here in Washington that Mr. Roosevelt had given up the idea of trying to get the United States into World War II based on anything that was taking place in Europe or on the high seas of the Atlantic. Before the Pearl Harbor incident, the anti-war sentiment was predominant in the United States. A poll of public opinion revealed

that 81% of the people were against entering the war. Roosevelt had promised war. He had told the French that if they entered the war we would support them. At one time, our then Ambassador to France had asserted that the United States would be in the war nine days after France entered the war. Doubtless Roosevelt had made commitments to the British authorities which he felt obligated to keep. On the Atlantic he had virtually taken us into the war without the consent of Congress. He was on the toughest spot of any man in history. God only knows how many times he broke his oath and violated the law in order to arbitrarily participate in the war without an official declaration by the Congress of the United States. He had to have an incident. He had to have what it took to produce hysteria in the United States. The attack on Pearl Harbor was the answer.

The Pearl Harbor attack was not a surprise. Roosevelt expected it, Roosevelt desired it, Roosevelt precipitated it. Even Eleanor Roosevelt, in one of her column articles, said: "We were all expecting it."

The recent Pearl Harbor investigation, outside of a rather limited report made for the minority by United States Senator Ferguson of Michigan, was little more than a whitewash. The minority could not even bring out the facts because the necessary files were locked to the minority on the committee. Two members of the committee, it is believed, were virtually blackmailed by political pressure into signing a report not in harmony with their deepest convictions.

The weak, sick, burned-out, exhausted, crippled man at Warm Springs was haunted by the ghost of Pearl Harbor. Whether or not he committed suicide, the fact re-

A large number of such people see this act by FDR as a vast and harmful conspiracy that "proves FDR was pro-Communist and taking America down a road to Communism". Nothing is farther from the truth though. FDR was not pro-Communist, nor was Winston Churchill, but both courted the USSR because they knew it would be impossible to defeat the fascists without their help. The fact is that America began anti-Soviet preparations before World War II was even over, in addition to the fact that FDR supported Chiang Kai-Shek in China against Mao. Yes FDR provoked the attack, but looking back at the situation today, and knowing the situation at the time, its hard to imagine that he didn't do the right thing. Pearl Harbor was a tragedy, and I believe one that FDR would have avoided had he been able to, but in order to really understand our own history, right or wrong, we have to accept that Japan was provoked into attacking America, and why it was that FDR had to resort to such measures.

In 1948 Secretary of State Hull wrote the following in defense of the administration's approach to Japan:

There were three methods to meet the danger from Japan. One was by a preventive attack. But democracies do not engage in preventive attacks except with greatest difficulty. Had I suggested to the President that he go to Congress and ask for a declaration of war against Japan at some time after the invasion of southern Indo-China, he could have made a good case concerning the dangers to us inherent in Japan's course of aggression. But, remembering the fact that on August 13, 1941, only three weeks after Japan invaded southern Indo-China, the House of Representatives sustained the Selective Service Act by a majority of just one vote, it seems most unlikely that the President could have obtained a declaration.

Nor would the military and naval authorities have been ready for a preventive attack. The fact that they pleaded for more time solely to prepare our defenses in the Pacific was proof in itself that they were not prepared to take the offensive.

A preventive attack, moreover, would have run counter to our determination to pursue the course of peace to the end, with the hope, however microscopic, that even at the last hour the Japanese might have a change of heart.

The second method to meet the danger was to agree to Japan's demands. This would have given us peace--that is, until Japan, after strengthening herself through the concessions we should have made, was ready to move again. But it would have denied all the principles of right living among nations which we had supported; it would have betrayed the countries [China, Britain] that later became our allies; and it would have given us an infamous place in history.

When we realize that Japan was ruthlessly invading peaceful countries, that the United States had pleaded with her from the beginning to cease her course of military conquest in partnership with Hitler, and that all problems in the Pacific would have practically settled themselves if Japan had adopted a policy of peace, it is evident that Japan had no right to make demands upon us. Japan negotiated as if we, too, were an aggressor, as if both countries had to balance their aggressions. Japan had no more right to make demands upon us than an individual gangster has to make demands upon his intended victim.

The third method was simply to continue discussions with Japan, to convince her that her aggressions cost her more than they were worth, to point out to her that her partnership with Hitler could be as dangerous to her as it was to the rest of the world, to lay before her proposal after proposal which in the long run would have given her in peace the prosperity her military leaders were seeking in conquest.

It was this third that we chose. Of the three, it was the only American method.

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